

money in the Treasury, and thus keep the sterling exchange in the Treasury—which otherwise would have to be put on the general market, and be lost to the State.

Being convinced from experience that the legitimate business of my office, now four-fold greater than formerly, is sufficient to tax all my energies of mind and body, and that I cannot do justice to the interest of the State in a business so complicated as many of the transactions, which are carried on at such a distance, I respectfully recommend that a commission of one or more gentlemen, skilled in such business be appointed to conduct the future operations of the State, in importing supplies, whether for the purpose of continuing the operations or winding up the business.

A report of the Adjutant General covering reports of his subordinates in the different departments is herewith submitted.

The impressment of property of citizens by officers and agents of the Confederate government, harsh enough in itself, has become doubly so, by the constant disregard of the provision of the law regulating seizures. In addition to this, the flagrant outrages committed, in every part of the country, by straggling soldiers, and other persons in the Confederate service, having no shadow of authority to impress property, has become a grievance almost intolerable. A recital of many instances of such, which have been brought to my knowledge, would shock the moral sense of the most heartless.

I have urged in vain upon the authorities of the Confederacy to check this evil, and have used every possible effort to do so myself. But it seems to grow worse, and as the supplies of our people become more scant they feel more sensibly this unjust deprivation of their property, which reduces them almost to the verge of starvation. It must be stopped, if possible, and I earnestly recommend such action on your part as you may think best calculated to aid me in remedying the evil. My correspondence with the War Department on this subject is submitted for your consideration. I desire to call your attention specially to certain enactments